

Message Text

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PAGE 01 FLOREN 00439 261146Z

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SUBJECT: BUILDING SCANDAL IN PARMA TARNISHES LEFT'S
IMAGE

1. SUMMARY. A LAND SPECULATION AND PROFITEERING SCANDAL HAS DEVELOPED IN PARMA, WHICH HAS DAMAGED THE PCI/PSI FRONTIST COALITION. LE MANI PULITE (CLEAN HANDS) IMAGE OF THE PCI HAS RECEIVED A PUBLIC RELATIONS SETBACK BY THESE REVELATIONS PLUS INDICATIONS SOMETHING IS 'NOT QUITE RIGHT' IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW PCI HEADQUARTERS THERE. END SUMMARY.

2. THE SCANDAL WHICH HAD BEEN BREWING FOR SOMETIME BROKE IN THE PRESS WHEN 'COMITATO UNITARIO DI LOTTA PER LA CASA' (COMMITTEE STRUGGLING FOR HOUSING) HUNG 23 BEDSHEETS IN THE MAIN PUBLIC SQUARE OF PARMA ON WHICH THE ALLEGATIONS WERE DESCRIBED. ISSUE INVOLVES LAND WHICH CITY COULD HAVE EXPROPRIATED FOR 1,000 LIRE A SQUARE METER IN 1969-1970 BUT WHICH IT PLACED UNDER PLANNING LIMITATION INSTEAD.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 FLOREN 00439 261146Z

PRIVATE DEVELOPERS BOUGHT LAND AT 5,000 LIRE A SQUARE METER.

SUBSEQUENTLY, THEY BUILT ON AND SOLD PROPERTIES AT A REPORTED 150,000 LIRE A SQUARE METER.

3. MAGISTRATE HAS OPENED INQUIRY INTO AFFAIR AND SEQUESTERED DOCUMENTS DEALING WITH IT. PSI CITY ASSESSORE (COUNCILMAN) IN CHARGE OF URBAN AFFAIRS HAS SUBMITTED RESIGNATION BUT AS GESTURE OF CONFIDENCE IN HIM, CITY GIUNTA HAS KEPT HIM AS MEMBER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO'. DC OPPOSITION CALLED FOR RESIGNATION OF GIUNTA AND MAYOR AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A SPECIAL INQUIRY COMMITTEE TO GET TO BOTTOM OF MATTER. PCI/PSI GIUNTA REFUSED RESIGN AND INSTEAD CONSTITUTED SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL WITH VAGUE TERMS OF REFERENCE. OUTNUMBERED DC DEPARTED HALL IN PROTEST FOLLOWED BY MSI AND LIBERAL MEMBERS OF COUNCIL. PRI AND PSDI MEMBERS REMAINED IN HALL BUT ABSTAINED ON VOTE.

4. PCI SPECIAL INVOLVEMENT RESULTS FROM CONSTRUCTION OF PARTY HEADQUARTERS IN AREA RESERVED FOR RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION. PCI PROVINCIAL SECRETARY IN PRESS CONFERENCE CALLED TO SHOW COMMUNISTS HAD NOTHING TO HIDE ADMITTED FACTS BUT STATED PARTY SEAT IS NOT SIMILAR TO OFFICE WHERE 'PROFESSIONAL AND PRODUCTIVE WORK' (SIC) IS ACCOMPLISHED BUT IS A PLACE OF SOCIAL GATHERING. PCI MILITANTS DENY THAT INAUGURATION OF BUILDING HAS BEEN DELAYED BECAUSE PCI SECRETARY BERLINGUER HAS REFUSED TO COME TO PARMA BECAUSE OF TAINT OF IRREGULARITY.

5. COMMENT: TO DATE, PAPERS PUBLISHED IN DISTRICT WHICH HAVE CARRIED THE STORY HAVE BEEN 'IL RESTO DEL CARLINO' AND 'LA NAZIONE'. POTENTIAL FOR DAMAGE TO PCI IMAGE SERIOUS IF ALLEGATIONS HAVE ANY VALIDITY AND IF SCANDAL IS NOT BURIED SOMEHOW IN LONG AND COMPLICATED PROCESS SEEMINGLY WITHOUT END. AT PRESENT, ACTION SEEMS TO REST WITH CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE AND MAGISTRATE'S INVESTIGATION.

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 FLOREN 00439 261146Z

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